TERRITORIAL TIMES

Prescott Arizona Corral of Westerners International

A publication of the Prescott Corral of Westerners International
Volume 4, Number 1

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Interior photographs in this edition are courtesy of the Gardner/Steiger family. Front and back cover photos were taken by Bruce Fee. The sketch on page 14 was by George Phippen. The cartoon on page 18 was by J. R. Williams.

John Huff Designs prepared the front cover layout.

Cover Photo: The George Phippen painting *Tying the Knots in the Devil's Tail* based on a Gail Gardner poem.

Back Cover Photo: Pat Haptonstall's miniature bronze of Smoki Snake Dancers.

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Introduction

This is a very special edition of the *Territorial Times*. Instead of including a number of articles on a variety of topics, this issue concentrates on the life work of a single man: Prescott's legendary "poet lariat" Gail I. Gardner—mostly in his own words.

In some ways this effort had its beginnings in 2008 when the Prescott Corral presented a program at the Prescott Elks Theater celebrating Gail and his accomplishments, as part of that year's Arizona History Convention. The program consisted of a PowerPoint presentation about Gail's life by Dick Bowerman, followed by a performance by Gail's grandson Gail Steiger of several of Gail's poems set to music.

The next step came when Prescott Corral Historian Bruce Fee rummaged through his storage area to find a number of audiotapes (recorded between 1968 and 1986) of Gail telling stories of an earlier Prescott. Bruce then enlisted Russ Sherwin who transcribed the tapes into MS Word documents.

When Bruce presented this treasure to the editorial board of the *Territorial Times* there was instant agreement that we should make this material available by presenting it—in Gail's own words—in this edition of the *Times*. We decided to introduce Gail with a summary of his life written by Dick Bowerman; followed by Gail's stories that Russ pieced together and edited from the tapes; and winding up with a remembrance of Gail by his daughter, Cynthia.

Gail Gardner first published some of his poetry in 1935 in a small book titled *Orejana Bull, For Cowboys Only.* He very thoughtfully included a glossary of terms that non-cowboys could reference. It was republished in 1950 and 1963. An expanded version of *Orejana Bull* was published in 1987 by the Sharlot Hall Museum. Additional poems were included and Warren Miller of the museum added a foreword and some explanatory notes. Copies are available at the museum gift shop.

The Territorial Times Editorial Board would like to thank the Gardner/Steiger and Phippen families for their assistance in preparing this publication.

GAIL GARDNER: A Man Worth Remembering

By Dick Bowerman

Gail Irwin Gardner was a true original, a man who left a lasting mark on the community where he was born, raised and spent almost all of his life. By turns he was a scholar, athlete, reluctant storekeeper, cowboy, rancher and postmaster. He also was a mainstay of Prescott's "World's Oldest Rodeo;" a founder and mainstay of the Smoki People; and an original member of the Prescott Corral of Westerners International. But mostly his fame came from his talents as a storyteller and cowboy poet.

Gail Gardner was born Christmas day 1892 to James I. Gardner and Rebecca Bell Gardner at the family residence at 101 N. Mount Vernon. James Gardner came to Prescott in 1879 with little besides ambition but by the time Gail was born, James was a prominent Prescott merchant.

The Future Cowboy Poet

As a youngster Gail liked to work in his father's store to earn spending money. One of his favorite jobs was to grind coffee beans. Gail was on the small side and often had trouble getting the beans into the grinder. Around Christmas time the coffee companies would put candy and other treats with the beans to entice customers to buy their particular brand. Gail was not always able to separate the candy from the beans. He would go ahead anyway and run the machine with mixed results. Some ladies would bring back their ground coffee and complain that it tasted like peppermint and other assorted flavors. Gail often commented that he just might have started the trend toward flavored coffee.

Gail attended grade school and high school in Prescott and he was a star running back on the first PHS football team to have a coach and uniforms. There were seven graduates in his high school class, six boys and one girl. His parents then sent him east to Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire to prepare him for college and to sharpen his social skills.

Most of Gail's father's customers paid in gold dust or nuggets, thus Gail left home equipped with a money belt full of gold to pay for his tuition and other expenses at the academy. Gail later told the family the people at Exeter at first did not know how to deal with the payment in gold. They wanted paper money but eventually figured out a way to handle the gold.

The next year Gail enrolled at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire. There were two reasons why he chose Dartmouth. A judge who lived in Prescott had graduated from Dartmouth and was always after Gail's father to send him to the judge's alma mater. The second reason was that Gail liked the rural setting as opposed to the other Ivy League schools in heavily populated areas. He said, that if he was going to spend that much time in the east, he wanted as much open space as possible.

While at Dartmouth Gail became a star athlete and captain of the gymnastic team. He joined a fraternity and made the transition from denim to dinner jacket without a hitch. He graduated in 1914 with a BS degree in math. Upon graduation he was offered a position to coach a local prep school's gymnastic team and teach a few math classes, but he had spent enough time in the east and was anxious to return to Prescott, so he turned down the offer.

Dartmouth College Athlete

While Gail was attending college he became romantically involved with a stunningly beautiful New York actress. They were briefly engaged but she wanted to live in New York and continue her acting career. Gail wanted no further part of the east and its lifestyle, and the engagement was ended.

Gail worked both in his father's store and as a cowboy at a ranch in Skull Valley. He wanted to be outside working with livestock. Gail's father could see that he did not have any interest in taking over the family business. "I know you want to be a hammer heeled cowboy. Go for it, and I will help you buy an outfit."

James Gardner had a small ranch in Skull Valley that had a large apple orchard planted by his wife's brother. When the orchard matured the crops were ruined seven years in a row due to late frost. On the eighth year the orchard produced a bumper crop. Gail and his uncle were kept busy picking and packaging apples to send to market. People from all over Northern Arizona came to buy and pick the apples and Gail's father sold hundreds of boxes in his store.

The property had a cienega pasture, swamp, and sandy wash at one end. Later this wash was named the Gardner Wash. It had a quarter section, 160 acres that James gave to Gail to establish a headquarters for his new venture. After adding several Forest Service sections to the original 160 acres, the ranch would include the land in Skull Valley and leased pasture at the top of Copper Basin in the Sierra Prieta Mountains. Gail started his ranching career there in 1916 when he began buying cattle and partnered up with neighboring rancher Van Dixon.

In 1917 Gail left to serve in WWI and his partner Van Dickson took care of the outfit in his absence. Gail traveled by train from Arizona to enlist in the army at Washington DC. Somewhere in the middle of Kansas he saw a herd of fat cattle grazing in a lush green pasture. He thought: Just a week ago I was chasing a bunch of half starved bony-backed cattle through the cactus and cat claw canyons of Copper Basin and Skull Valley. He whipped out a pen and composed his most famous poem, *Sierry Petes* in the club car of the Santa Fe limited train on Santa Fe stationary while on his way east. He mailed the verses to his sister Mary in Prescott for safekeeping.

The name of the poem comes from the Sierra Prieta Mountains located west of Prescott. An old miner from Maine that Gail knew always called them the Sierry Petes because he could not pronounce Sierra Prietas. Thus

Sierry Petes (aka Tying the Knots in the Devil's Tail) became the title of Gail's best-known poem.

During WWI Gail learned to fly the Curtiss "Jenny" biplane in Texas. He never saw action outside of Texas as he was assigned to train other pilots in the Lone Star State. Gail often said, "no German aircraft ever got past west Texas while I was there." After he returned from WWI, Gardner was often asked why he served in the Army. His reply was always "to make the world safe for Democrats."

Back in Skull Valley

Early in 1919 Gail bought out Van Dickson's interest in the Skull Valley Ranch. Gail often said that Van was the best cowboy he ever knew. After they dissolved their partnership Gail still asked Van for advice and help when he found himself in a jackpot. Van continued ranching to the west of Gail's home pasture.

In 1921 Gail Gardner was one of the original organizers of the Smoki, a group of Anglo businessmen dedicated to the preservation of Indian ceremonial dances and artifacts. Gail's involvement with the Smoki People was a very important part of his life and he was the Smoki Chief in 1930.

He danced with the Smoki for 43 years before his costume was retired. Gail led the Smoki Snake Dance many times and after his retirement he continued to give the annual temperance lecture before each year's ceremonials. He was the last surviving charter member of the Smoki People.

Gail batched on his ranch for a few years before he met Delia Gist. She lived with her parents on an Angora goat ranch a couple of miles south of the Gardner ranch. Delia lived on and proved up, by herself, a homestead of 640 acres on the east side of the current highway going to Kirkland. A well and windmill were named after her. The Delia well is still in use today. With her own hands she built a small house and fenced the property on her homestead.

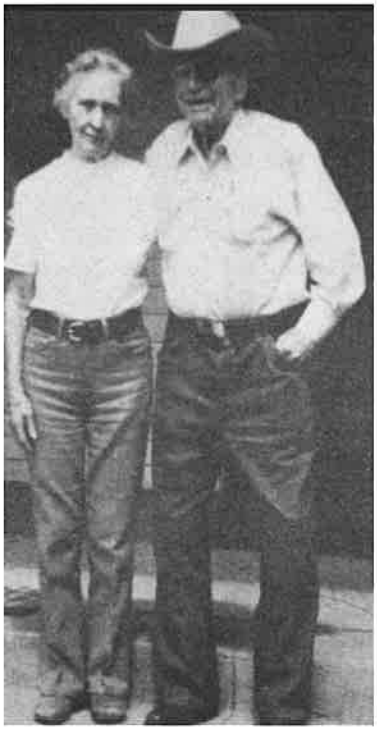
Gail's friends called Delia "the goat girl" and figured he must be pretty sweet on her because he gave her his favorite horse. His friends said the reason he thought about marrying her was to get his horse back.

By now Gail had gotten over the rejection from the NY actress and said his Delia was worth a whole batch of NY actresses. And besides, actresses could not work cattle, mend fences, or sidestep fresh cow pies. So, at the age of 31, Gail married Delia Gist on his Skull Valley Ranch on September 22, 1924. Gail often said that was the best day of his life.

From this marriage James G. Gardner and Cynthia Gardner were born. James graduated from Dartmouth in 1952 and later went to work for Valley National Bank and retired in Tempe, AZ. Cynthia married Sam Steiger and had twin boys, Gail and Lew, and daughter Delia.

Gail ran around 500 mother cows on his ranch through some lean years by browsing some of them on brush. There were some lean years when it forgot to rain and others when there was six inches of snow hanging on the oak brush.

In 1928 the price of cattle went up, and on a hunch and with the help of neighboring ranchers Gail gathered and sold most of the herd. In a few months most of his cowboy friends wished they had the same foresight. The depression hit and cows were worth five to ten dollars each—that was if you could find a buyer. When asked why he had sold almost all his cattle Gail said, " I could handle them better in my pocket than I could in the brush."


Delia and Gail Gardner

For about the next 30 years he ran around 20 head of real gentle cows on the headquarter pasture in Skull Valley for this small enterprise. Gail would visit the small herd on weekends and always maintained that good strong fences insured good neighbors.

After tying up some loose ends in the latter part of 1928 Gail and Delia left the ranch house and moved reluctantly to Prescott where Gail went to work as manager of the Spear Fuel and Oil Co. He held that position until 1935.

In spite of his job in town, Gail and Delia and their children were barely surviving during The Great Depression. They finally moved in with his parents on North Mount Vernon St. Gail's mother was very upset that they had not moved into the family home sooner.

Gail said that after they moved in with his parents everything went along fine except the kitchen arrangement: too many cooks in the kitchen. Delia and his mother had different ways of running the kitchen. To keep the gals from locking horns his father had a new kitchen built upstairs for the sole use of Delia. After the new kitchen was built, things rippled along "smooth as bear grass in the breeze." The house today still has two kitchens.

In 1931 Gail had his first encounter with a "low down skunk" who had laid claim to some of his most famous songs and poems. Powder River Jack had put out a songbook that included Gail's *Sierry Petes* and Curly Fletchers' *Strawberry Roan* and claimed them as his own.

Powder River Jack came to Phoenix and found a sorry reception for his Hawaiian music. He bought some fancy dude outfits for himself and his wife Kitty. They sang every cow song they knew, including some that Curly and Gail had written. Curly and Gail were more than upset, so they decided to go to Phoenix and take some action. Gail said, "It was to no avail, Powder River Jack didn't even own the clothes he stood in and neither one of us wanted Kitty."

Gail became an assistant postmaster in 1936, and in July 1937 he became the postmaster of Prescott. One of his few regrets was that his father did not live to see Gail in that post. Once Gail was asked what were the qualifications for a first rate postmaster. He quickly replied, "all ya got to'do is git yerself an old broken down cowboy then punch out his brains. Now you will have yerself a first class postmaster."

Gail had been the official announcer of the Prescott Rodeo for several years during his ranching days and with his booming voice did not need a PA system. By the time he was once more asked to announce at the Prescott Rodeo in 1938 he needed a PA system, as the crowds by then were much larger.

Gail Gardner was the official grand marshal of the Prescott Frontier Days Parade six times. There were other times when Gail became the "unofficial" marshal when the official marshal failed to show up or was detained on Whiskey Row. 1987 was Gail's last year as grand marshal. He sat up front in an old Cadillac convertible driven by Sam Steiger.

During the 1950's Gail had his left eye removed due to failed radium treatments for skin cancer. For many years he wore a black eye patch. Later in life he wore glasses with a darkened lens on the left side.

Katie Lee, a noted actress, folksinger and environmentalist stayed with Gail & Delia in 1960. She was there to sort out ownership of several of Gail's songs. At first he was not too happy that she was questioning that he had written *Sierry Petes* and a few others. Before she left they had reached an understanding. She left as a friend and came back many times.

Gail Gardner and Cowboy Artist George Phippen

After her first visit with Gail she was asked to describe him. She said, "well, he isn't too tall, about 5ft. 7in., he wears boots always, his legs are so bowed you could drive a freight train through them. He has a little eyetooth that sticks out and twinkles when he smiles which is often. The sun has burned him through of holes and given him freckles. His knuckles are knotted from pulling on ropes and reins. The first thing that gets your attention is the black patch over his left eye."

Gail's tenure as postmaster ended in Oct. of 1957, the same year his mother died at 100. Upon retirement Gail became more active in the Elks, Sheriff's Posse, and rode in most of the Prescott Frontier Days Parades. Retirement also gave him more time to read history books. Barry Goldwater said Gail was a walking Arizona history book. His home library held a western book collection larger than most public libraries today.

Because of his interest in western history, Gail was an original member of the Prescott Corral of Westerners International and served as the second corral "Sheriff" in 1963.

Western artist George Phippen and Gail Gardner were good friends and hunting buddies during their days in Skull Valley and Phippen made several sketches using the Gardner Ranch as subjects for future paintings. Later Sam Steiger, Gail's then son-in-law, commissioned Phippen to create a special painting for Gail based on *The Sierry Petes*. Without Gail's knowledge the artist made several visits to Gail's tack room to sketch equipment to make the painting more authentic and personal.

George completed the oil painting for Steiger to give to Gail for his 66th birthday. Gail told Sam it was one of the best birthday presents he ever received. He placed it over the fireplace where it remains today.

In 1960 Gail had only a handful of cows running on his Skull Valley pasture. He was approached by local rancher Bud Webb to sell out. Gail said, "Bud made me an offer that I could not refuse. Besides the ranch was now cut in half by the Santa Fe Railroad."

Gail's sister, Mary, became a successful author in California in the 1930's under the moniker Mary James. Her nieces and nephews called her "Aunt Jim." She is same Mary for whom many of Gail's poems were written. She died in 1973.

Gail's contributions to his hometown were recognized when a major Prescott street was named in his honor. Statewide recognition came when May 2, 1980, was set aside by the state of Arizona as "Gail Gardner Day" to honor "A man worth remembering, Gail Irwin Gardner."

Prescott Rodeo Parade Grand Marshal

When asked about the secret to his longevity, Gail would reply, "I have all the petty vices, I smoke cigarettes, chew tobacco, drink whiskey, and play poker. I have my parents to thank for not allowing me to engage in any of the harmful vices."

When Gail was 80 years young he took a raft trip down the Colorado River. While other members of the group were raving about the beauty, Gail remarked, "Wait a minute, you have no idea how hard it is to crowd all that scenery through one eye."

Gail Gardner's last roundup was on November 23, 1988 at the age of 95. His loving wife, Delia, died 2 years later at the age of 90.

NOTE

This article is based largely on recollections of people who knew Gail well. One of those was his friend Katie Lee who published an article about his problems with poetry pirates in the Journal of Arizona History, Vol. 15, No. 3, summer 1977.

Origins of Smoki and Snake Dance

GAIL GARDNER SPEAKS: In 1921, the Prescott Frontier Days Association found themselves out of funds. Well, what to do? To keep the celebration, which was started in 1888, the good citizens decided to have a one-day show and call it Way Out West, and charge a buck admission. It was purely local talent, which of course would come for free.

Gail Gardner Leading the Smoki Snake Dance

For that first show they'd taken a Ford automobile and put eccentric wheels on the front and they put a saddle on the hood and with the eccentric wheels a guy rode a buckin' Ford around. And then a prominent judge in Prescott did a tight-wire act. The wire was just layin' on the ground, but he had a balance pole and did some quite good acting to show that he was walkin' a tight wire. So in the old Yavapai Club we talked about, well now, what kind of a stunt could we put on? We came up with the idea of a burlesque on the Moki Snake Dance. All of the old maps showed the Hopi reservation as Moki, and it was universally called just that in 1921.

So we were talking about having a snake dance as a part of the Way Out West Show. Well, in preparing for that, we tried to get artificial snakes. We ordered a snake or two. They were not realistic. They had these various street carnival shows and one of the shows they had was "Esau the Snake Eater." Well, some of us went to see Esau. And here was a guy with a black wig on, and they had this cage full of snakes. There wasn't a rattlesnake in the bunch. They were all bull snakes. But they'd taken one snake and killed it and skinned it back, and Esau once in a while would fake to take a bite out of that skinned snake there. That was Esau the Snake Eater.

Well the carnival had gone broke, and we were talking about having a snake dance as a part of the Way Out West Show, so this guy says, "Well, why don't you use live snakes?" "Oh, gosh," we said, "We couldn't do that!" "Oh, yes you can," he said. "I'll

bring a cage full of 'em up to the Yavapai Club and show you how to handle 'em." So he brought a whole box of snakes up to the Yavapai Club and he gave us one, and he said, "Now I'll tell you how to handle these." Says, "Don't ever squeeze one, just let 'em — hold 'em lightly, let 'em crawl through your hands." So that seemed reasonable. So we bought — the Smokis — or the Smokeys, they were then — bought that whole cage of bull snakes. So when it came time to put on our Snake Dance, why we had real live snakes.

It took a lot of persuasion plus a few demonstrations before the Smoki group decided to dance with live snakes. Fortunately we had the assistance of two ladies, one a very fine artist who had lived among the Hopis, the late Kate Cory, and Mrs. Tomber, who had a great deal to do with the production of that first dance, and also a man who had made a remarkable study of the Indian ceremonials, particularly the Hopi, one of our past chiefs, the late Lyle Abbot.

The date was set for Thursday, May 26, 1921. And one short item on the program read, "One Thirty PM: Smoki Snake Dance." That was all there was on the program. Incidentally, since we were portraying the Mokis, we pronounced Smoki with a short I – Smokey. And it was not until the third dance that we changed our name to Smok-eye with the long I. Well, that's where the name came from.

That first Way Out West Show was something of a brawl. The prohibition moonshine flowed freely, both among the actors and the audience. It was a fun day of which the Snake Dance was only a small part. We danced right out in the hot sun. No scenery, no nothin'. All the proceeds of the show went, of course, to the Frontier Days Association.

The year 1922 showed much the same situation so there was another Way Out West and the Smoki put on another Snake Dance. Better trained and better performed. And the Smokis added an educational feature in which the mounted Indians and warriors afoot waylaid an emigrant train. Of course, wagons and teams were easy to come by in those days. The Indians swarmed down on this emigrant train, and Mrs. Fay Southworth, Dr. Southworth's wife, was driving—was on the seat of the wagon, and one of the savages started to climb up on the wagon and she took a fryin' pan and conked him on the head with it! And with the noise— you coulda heard it clear up in the grandstand. It was quite effective, you know.

And then, John Reno our property man was getting pretty good and we'd made these big copper shields for the Indians to carry. Well, John Reno was carrying one of these copper shields and he got too close to that old wagon team and one of those old work horses let out with a heavy kick! Well old John woulda had a big horseshoe track on his belly if he hadn't been carryin' that shield!

At the close of our second year, the Smoki were formally organized and a Chief elected. But the Frontier Days Association again received all the proceeds. However, even after the first dance the Smoki had lost all idea of burlesque. The hot sunshine, the rhythm of the drums, the exotic costumes over the brown body paint, gave us all a kinship with, and a deep appreciation of, real

Indian ceremonials, and established the basic purpose of Smoki.

Our third dance was all Smoki. We had added a Kachina Dance and a Flute Dance and our now well-established Snake Dance. Also, the mud-heads made their appearance. Our version of the Snake Dance was purposely different from the Hopis, principally by the fact that we used bull snakes instead of rattlesnakes. Also, it was so difficult to teach our dancers the Hopi chant that establishes the tempo of their dances that we had to use a drum to start and maintain the rhythm. [The Hopis] dance entirely to the rhythm of the chants. This third year and thereafter, the Smoki people kept the receipts of the ceremonials.

President Coolidge Waves His Smoki Stetson

The early dances were held in the afternoon, at the fairgrounds. We soon had a set built to establish a more Indian atmosphere. The first set was built by a local carpenter, mainly out of muslin and lath painted to look like adobe. We soon found out that nobody but this one carpenter knew how to erect the primitive set and how to take it down. We had to hire him every year 'cause nobody else could do it.

Well, eventually we built a more substantial set out of fiberboard, properly numbered and lettered so that the tribesmen could set it up and take it down. Our dressing rooms were the stock corrals, with shelves added to the interior on which to place the costumes in proper order. Then later, large canvas tarps were spread over the corrals to keep out the sun and the unlikely event of rain. Unlikely because the dances were held in June.

In 1925, we invited President Calvin Coolidge to attend our show. Made him [our only] honorary member. Sent him an Indian tanned buckskin inscribed with all of our names. We also sent him one of those high crowned, red, yellow-banded Stetson hats the Smoki were wearing that year. He favored us with a picture of himself wearing the hat, and some irreverent Smoki remarked that he looked like snowbird under a sifter, which he probably did.

That same year, early in 1926, the Smoki took a small group of dancers to Bisbee to appear before the State Convention of the American Legion. The Legionnaires were impressed and voted to send the Smoki to represent Arizona in their National Convention at the Sesqui-centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. It should be noted, of course, that practically all of the Smoki at that period were veterans of World War I. It might be added that any veteran had learned to march, and they were therefore far easier to train to dance to the drumbeat. Some guy who hadn't been in the

service, why he turned out to be something of a stumble bum and had to be worked on and worked on. But all the old soldiers picked that up right now.

That Philadelphia trip of October, 1926, was a safari and a saga without equal in the annals of any organization. You packed 36 Smoki braves into one Pullman car in Prescott, rolled them down to Phoenix and started them over the Southern Pacific to New Orleans. Naturally there had to be lots of doubling up, even to a couple of smaller guys in an upper berth. From New Orleans north, over the Southern railroad to St Louis, where there was a layover of a few hours. Some of the boys had some high adventures in St Louis. And we were all wearing those high crowned, red, Smoki hats

Gail in Costume With Snakes

Then we went on to Philadelphia where our Pullman car was [parked] in the railroad yards, to serve as a dormitory for anyone wishing to stay there. But most of us went to hotels. That huge stadium holds over a hundred thousand, and it didn't appear that many saw our Snake Dance. But we heard later that our audience was more than twenty thousand. We had brought along all the [fat] bull snakes we could catch. But they weren't enough, so our director rented a batch of waspy little black snakes from a zoo. These little varmints nearly ate us alive! Not a bit like our own home-raised gentle bull snakes. Some guys seemed like would get bitten by those bull snakes. I never did get bitten by one. But Cecil James was one of our dancers, and gosh if he'd get near a bull snake it'd bite him. I don't know why, but something about him that a bull snake'd bite him. Of course, the bite of a bull snake is no more serious than a hen peckin' ya'. It'll draw blood, but that's about all.

Our 1927 show did pretty well and in 1928 we had a trip to Phoenix with a parade and an afternoon and an evening show. We learned then and there that transporting costumes, scenery and busy Prescott men out of town was not in the cards for Smoki if we wanted to remain solvent.

In 1929 and '30, we brought our financial heads above water, and so a wise Chief and Council decided that we'd put our money into something that enthusiastic New Dealers couldn't spend. So in 1931 we began the Pueblo. Hauled rock, dug foundations, laid up walls, all through hard work and cooperation. Trucks were donated. We had 35 trucks one Sunday! Members worked Saturdays and Sundays. By 1935 the Pueblo was fairly complete but even now, we still find work to do on it. The museum, of course, was a government project of the depression. But a member of the Smoki was largely responsible for the design and

execution, and the Smoki people are its custodians. The fine display of prehistoric artifacts of this area is well worth the time of any visitor from any area.

About the time the Pueblo was under construction, the women of Smoki demanded an organization of their own as part of Smoki. And their organization was formed literally over the dead bodies of two members. One of them was this chronicler who is speaking to you now. It was a burning issue at the time, but now we freely admit that some of our most dedicated and effective members are of the gentle sex.

The earlier ceremonies were held in the afternoon in June, which meant we had to practice all through the month of May. In the evenings, when the businessmen could attend, many evenings in Prescott were pretty often cold, and so for that and other good reasons the ceremonies were advanced to the month of August. While still operating in June, we did a night show, which involved a formidable problem of lighting. We used to make our own body paint, which showed up pretty well in daylight, but in that first night show our dancers looked more like the natives of the Congo than members of the Smoki nation.

As Smoki's financial status improved, we were able to build a small Pueblo at the fairgrounds, which got us away from the canvas covers, the corral dressing rooms, and gave us a convenient storage space for the now smaller number of necessary panels needed to top off the Pueblo. We had a big rain during the show along about 1953, and then we really appreciated the new building. No more tarps above us full of rainwater. You old timers have had that rainwater trickling down your necks, I know.

There've been some awful funny things. That time Bert Savage was in the pit waitin' to go out and the Smokis were hunting, and the skunk came out of the hole. They'd doctored up a tomcat so he looked like a skunk. Put cotton on his tail and cotton down his back, and then this old skunk was supposed to come out and confront the hunters. A few pigeons had been let out, and then a rabbit'd been let out, and the Indians shot at him, and then came this skunk, which is supposed to floor the Indians. Well that tomcat went round and round a time or two and went right down in the pit on top of Bert Savage, where he was waitin' to come out for one of those magic stunts. And he pitched that cat out, the old cat made another turn and went clear across the parade ground and clear across the fairgrounds into the Miller Valley where he'd come from!

Henry Brickmeyer'd gone over and got that tomcat. We wanted a black cat we could make a skunk out of, and we asked this man, says, "Can we borrow that black cat?" "Borrow him, hell! You can have 'im if you can catch 'im." So Henry got a box and he went up and the old cat was on the back porch asleep and he just claps the box down over him, you know, and slipped the board under the box and we had our tomcat. Well that god-damn cat just growled at us all the way back to the Pueblo, you know.

We had one man there, I don't remember his name, but he just took the cat by the front legs and arched his wrist under the cat's chin like that. Hell, I wouldn't a touched that damn tomcat; he'd eat you up. But this guy sure

knew how to handle a cat. He just had both front legs and had his wrist under the cat's chin, and then he doctored him up. He just dipped his tail in the shellac and got cotton all over it, and put some shellac on his back, put dabs of cotton along there and that was our skunk!

In the early dances, some of the members felt they needed a spot of Dutch Courage to be able to handle these ferocious bull snakes. And the tribe even furnished rations, a four-ounce bottle of the local moonshine. That liquor tasted like the bottom of a birdcage, and smelled like a Forest Service outhouse. But it was plenty potent I could say, about 120 proof! Boy, that would knock your head askew! This soon presented a problem which was handled by the inauguration of the Temperance Lecture. The lecture urged, and insisted on, complete sobriety on the day of the dance so that no jugged-up individual could destroy the fine precision of the ceremony.

We had one kind of a hassle [with the Hopis] one time. We were puttin' on a Bean Dance but it was at the wrong time of year. And some of the Hopis came down and protested putting on that Bean Dance at the wrong time of year. Russ Insley made all our property. Well, Russ took 'em out to the Pueblo and they were looking at some of the property that Russ had made, and some of the things he'd made were so much better than they had, so Russ said, "Well now, I'll give you these." So that placated the Indians and they went back with these to run the Bean Dance with and they were satisfied, but poor old Russ had to work the rest of that night re-makin' these things!

There is only one Honorary Chief: Barry Goldwater. Barry was initiated into Smoki in 1941 and has danced both in the Antelope and the Snake Lines. He has given us priceless volumes on ethnology and early research on Indian culture, long out of print, from the Smithsonian Institution and other government bureaus. When he was nominated for U. S. President in 1964, the Smoki people made him an Honorary Chief in proper ceremony, on the Courthouse Plaza.

In the production of our ceremonials, there can be found in our membership any kind of talent needed for that production. Electricians for our lighting, communications, woodsmen to harvest the trees for our set. Tractor operators. Plumbers and carpenters. Radio announcers, pick and shovel men, and cooks. And last but not least, property men and women. Skilled artists who research and design our costumes, and make 'em. There are valued members of the tribe who have never danced a step but without whom we could not function.

Smoki is unlike any other organization. No regular meetings, no dues. Asking only dedicated service and cooperation and rewarding with pride and knowledge of accomplishment. From the beginning in 1921, out in the hot sun, no set, no nothin', to the realistic atmosphere of an Indian village, in the evening firelight of 1972, and a superb and finished ceremonial performance, we've come a long, long way.

The final performance of the Smoki Snake Dance was in August 1990.

The Smoki Temperance Lecture

GAIL GARDNER SPEAKS: I don't believe that this lecture is necessary any more. But it's become sort of a tradition with the Smoki people, so we've been giving it since 1930. The reason we gave it in the first place, when we first started Smoki in 1921, why all of us, or most of us, had just come out of the service from World War I. We were a hard-playin', hard-drinkin' bunch of men, and we had a lot of fun, and when we had this first Snake Dance, as you remember, it was to furnish money for the Frontier Days, who was . . . broke then, and we had this one day show and that was the origin of Smoki.

To go back into the history a little bit, we tried to get artificial snakes, and we couldn't get any artificial snakes, but there was a carnival man who'd gone broke in Prescott and he had a cage full of bull snakes, so he said, "Why don't you fellas use live snakes?" Oh, we couldn't do that! Well, we did. And that was what made the Snake Dance and what has made our show.

All right, to have the courage to handle these ferocious big bull snakes, many of these early soldiers thought they needed a little Dutch Courage. The late Sam Ensminger, before the Snake Dance, would set at each man's station a little four-ounce bottle of moonshine. This was in the prohibition days. That moonshine was about a hundred and twenty proof; it tasted like the bottom of a birdcage, and it'd knock your elbows stiff, or anything else around you that was limber. Well, anyway, these boys would drink this moonshine—remember the show was in the afternoon and the sunshine was hot. Some men didn't drink at all, and some men'd drink two or three of those bottles.

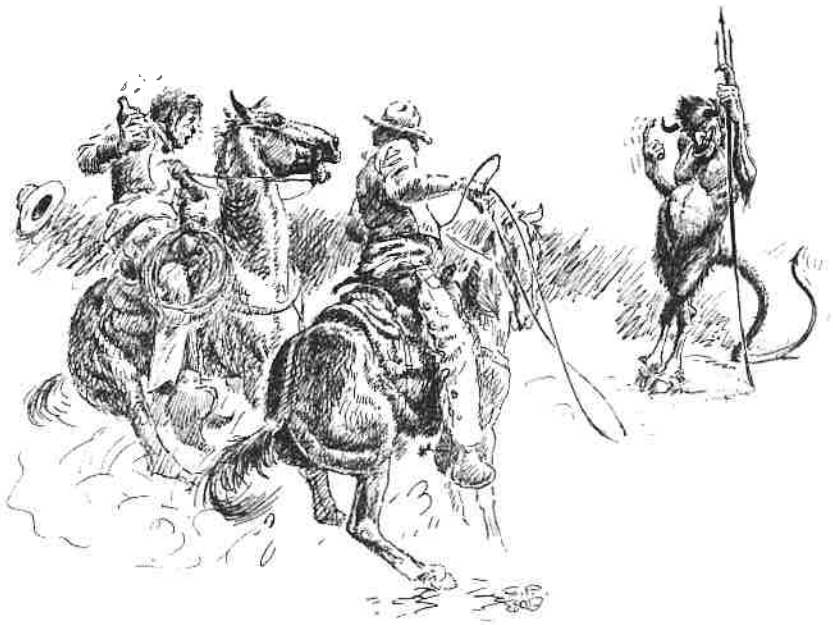
Well, it was disastrous. 'Cause he'd get out here and he would raise heck with our dance. From then on every dance director has had the authority and the power to take any man out of a dance or ceremony if he's been drinking at all. So we have set this rule: that during the day of the Smoki Dance, we do no drinking at all. That goes for beer, too. Now if you fellas think a Smoki Warrior can't get sloshed on beer, why you ought to go to a Smoki initiation sometime. So, the beer is out, and the hard stuff is out, so we do no drinking on the day of the Snake Dance, and we go out and put on the show with the fine precision that it deserves, and after the show, why that's a different story!

After the show, if any of you want to drop down and have a few snorts, why I'll be along to help you. But that is the story, and we still think it's very necessary, because we don't want anybody led off, we don't want our show gummed up, we want the show the way it should be, tops in every department. And that means no alcoholic stimulant any time during the day of the Snake Dance 'till after run out with the snakes in the final show. That, my friends, is the Temperance Lecture.

Tying the Knots in the Devil's Tail

GAIL GARDNER SPEAKS: Well, the idea of my writing the poem came in this way: The late Bob Heckle and I were camped out at the old Deering Ranch, which is in the Sierry Petes, that's another title of the song. Well, the Sierry Petes are really the Sierra Prieta Mountains, just west of Prescott, Arizona. We were camped out there and we were branding calves, and tying up an occasional steer and leading him in, and we came in town one time for a little whizzer. We came to town and the way cowboys do, why we got around, there was — alcoholic stimulant was plentiful, and you could find a card game if you knew where to look, and our companions, well, we'll call them "dispensers of delight," charitably. So when we were going back to camp we stopped right where the Thumb Butte picnic grounds are now. We had a big double log corral there then, so Bob and I got down and took a drink out of the crick, we needed water very badly. And Bob said, "You know, the Devil gets cowboys that do what we been doing." Well, that was the germ of the idea. But it didn't come to anything until I was going back in 1917 to get in the service for World War I. I was going through the plains of Kansas on the train, on the Santa Fe Limited. Well, I looked out and here were all these broad-beamed cattle, not an ear mark on a one of 'em, farmers walkin' around among 'em afoot. Well, I thought about the outlaw cattle that Bob and I had been tying up and leading in, and then I also thought that when I got into the service there would be no more little whizzers such as Bob and I had had in Prescott.

So I sat down and on Santa Fe stationery, I wrote this as a poem, not as a song, and sent it back to my sister and forgot about it for years. Then, in later years I had occasion to dig it out to read to somebody, and when I was reading it why the late Bill Simon came in. He said, "Gail, that'd make a real good song.



Give me the words." So I gave Billy the words, and he dredged up some old tune out of the public domain and then he began singing it around the cow camps and rodeos and so on. Well it wasn't long 'till I commenced hearing it over the radio. So that is where the song came from and how it originated and how it got scattered around.

THE SIERRY PETES

(Or Tying the Knots In The Devil's Tail)

By Gail I. Gardner

Away up high in the Sierry Petes,
Where the yeller pines grows tall,
Ole Sandy Bob and Buster Jig,
Had a rodeer camp last fall.

Oh, they taken their hosses and runnin' irons
And mabbe a dawg or two,
An' they 'lowed they'd brand all the long yered calves,
That come within their view.

And any old doggie that flapped long ears,
An' didn't bush up by day,
Got his long yeres whittled an' his old hide scorched,
In a most artistic way.

Now, one fine day ole Sandy Bob,
He throwed his seago down,
"I'm sick of the smell of burnin' hair,
And I 'lows I'm a-goin' to town."

So they saddles up an' hits 'em a lope,
Fer it weren't no sight of a ride,
And them was the days when a Buckeroo
Could 'ile up his insides.

They starts her in at the Kaintucky Bar,
At the head of Whiskey Row,
And they winds up down at the Depot House,
Some forty drinks below.

They then sets up and turns around,
And goes her the other way,
An' to tell you the Gawd-forsaken truth,
Them boys got stewed that day!

As they was a-ridin' back to camp,
A-packin' a pretty good load,
Who should they meet but the Devil himself,
A-prancing' down the road!

Sez he, "You ornery cowboy skunks,
"You'd better hunt 'yer holes,
Fer' I've come up from Hell's Rim Rock,
To gather in your souls."

Sez Sandy Bob, "Old Devil be damned,
"We boys is kinda' tight,
But you ain't a-goin' to gather no cowboy souls,
'Thout you has some kind of a fight."

So, Sandy Bob punched a hole in his rope,
And he swang her straight and true,
He lapped it onto the Devil's horns,
An' he taken his dallies too.

Now Buster Jig was a riata man,
With his gut-line coiled up neat,
So he shaken her out an' built him a loop,
An' he lassed the Devil's hind feet.

Oh, they stretched him out an' they tailed him down,
While the irons was a-gettin' hot,
They cropped and swaller-forked his yeres,
Then they branded him up a lot.

They pruned him up with a de-hornin' saw,
An' they knotted his tail fer a joke,
Then they rid off and left him there,
Necked to a Black-Jack oak.

Well, if you're ever up high in the Sierry Petes,
An' you hear one Hell of a wail,
You'll know it's that Devil a-bellerin' around,
About them knots in his tail.

From a Poem to a Painting

GAIL GARDNER SPEAKS: I've had a great deal of fun with it [Tying the Knots in the Devil's Tail] and of course, this painting that George Phippen has done, well, it's sort of the Mona Lisa to me. It's one of my greatest treasures.

George [said he] wanted permission to reprint the poem just to illustrate some little sketches around it for a magazine. Well, I didn't know that he'd been commissioned to do this painting, so when they sprung the painting on me, why it really hit me like a ton of bricks, and for one time I didn't have much to say.

George . . . wanted to know what the cowboys wore forty years ago [for his illustrations], and I told him. Well now, for example, these two cowboys, [in the painting] they have vests on. They have shirts, and one of 'em has sleeve holders. Well, in those days you bought a shirt and the sleeve lengths were all the same. A short-armed guy like Bob, he had to get a pair of sleeve holders to hold his sleeves up. These shirts had a little picadilly pocket in 'em that wouldn't hold anything much, so these cowboys would hunt up an old vest, you know, from an old suit, and that'd hold their cigarette papers and their tobacco and their matches and so on. Of course, the vest wore out pretty badly in the brush, but you could always find another old vest all the time, 'cause you bought a suit of clothes in those days you bought a coat and vest and pants. You had to take the vest whether you wanted it or not.

Now, the rigging of these two cowboys, of course they're Yavapai County, and most of the Yavapai County men were, in my time at least, were centers, that is center-fire saddles, or dally-welte men. When they caught something they took their dallys around the saddle horn instead of tying hard and fast. Well in this painting, old Bob Heckle he's caught the Devil and he's takin' his dallys. And if you look real close at the painting, you'll see just a little smoke comin' off the saddle horn, cause those dallys are on there and that devil's pretty heavy.

Both men, their horses, they have spade bits. Well the center-fire cowboys usually used the spade bits, you know, and solid reins. So you see them, and I mentioned that Buster Jig—supposed to be me—Buster Jig was using a riata, which is a braided rawhide rope. Old Sandy Bob, he's using a sego. A sego was a grass rope. We called 'em segos 'cause they were supposed to be made out of sea grass. They weren't, they were made out of manila, and the real name of the ropes was Plymouth Yacht line. Of course, all the cowboys today and most of them now use nylon. But that was the idea, and these outfits, both the cowboys, you notice, on their stirrups will have tapaderos. Tapaderos are stirrup coverings which [are] protection against the brush. If you ride in this country without tapaderos, why you may have a fine pair of boots but they'll come out as a beautiful suede if you wear 'em in the brush for about a week, because it'll make suede leather out of 'em. That brush'll eat 'em up!

So both of 'em have tapaderos. And the saddles, of course, are of the time. There's a breast collar on one of these horses. Bob

Heckle's horse has a breast collar. Breast collars didn't come in until about 1920. The first breast collar I used was an old buggy britchen'. I had a little old horse, I couldn't keep the saddle on him, it'd slide backwards and slide forwards, and so I hunted up an old buggy britchen' and put it on him for a breast collar. Well now, almost all the cowboys today have breast collars on their saddles, and most of 'em even in Yavapai now use the double-cinch saddles and the breast collar. Don't draw anything very tight. It'll all hold together real fine.

Their boots, the early boots, were Buckingham and Hecht boots. Made of rather soft leather, and when your boots got old, you could cut 'em up and make strings and make a bosal for a hackamore out of those old boot tops. Now, the boots are all stitched up and you couldn't make anything out of 'em!

Well, those leather cuffs [on their sleeves]. I haven't seen a pair of them for 35, 40 years. But all the cowboys used to wear cuffs. One thing, they kept your sleeve out of your dallys. And also, in the Sierry Petes, the Sierra Prieta Mountains, there's a lot of locust [shrubs]. The locusts have long wicked thorns. Well you hit a patch of locusts when you're after something and you just throw those cuffs up in front of your face and the leather protects you. If they were just cloth, just the jumper of your shirt, why the locusts'd tear 'em off of you, but you have little cuffs that'll protect 'em. Then, another thing, your cuffs served as a sort of a memorandum. You were working on a rodeo somewhere, and you didn't know all the irons and earmarks, why you'd take your knife and just scratch the iron and the earmark on your cuff, so if any calf broke out of the rodeo, or the barrera [fence], and you had to brand him, why you'd know what brand and earmark to put on him.

A rodeo, you notice I pronounce it ro-day'-o, which is a Spanish pronunciation, and it means roundup. I believe the verb is ro-day'-ar. I'm not very well versed in Spanish. The cowboys of Yavapai County in my day, they called it ro-deer'. Well, it'd be ro-deer'. "The ro-deer'll be in Williamson Valley next week." Or, "The ro-deer'll be in Skull Valley tomorrow", that sort of thing. It was pronounced "ro-deer" but it came from ro-day-ar. Oh, incidentally, I spoke about the dallys, you know, takin' these dallys. The word "dallys" comes from the Spanish expression, "dar la vuelta"; give a turn. Well, 'course the cowboys made that "dally-welte." Dally-welte was about as close as they could come to it, which is all right.

Spanish or Mexican influence was very strong in Yavapai County. Some of our finest cowboys were Mexican or Mexican origin. Like Yaqui [Epifanio "Yaqui" Ordunez]. He was one of the finest old boys ever lived. He was a top-notch cowboy and all those Spanish expressions, why we knew about them and we used them. All the names, the nomenclature of your saddle, you know, your stirrup leathers, your rosaderos, tapaderos. Of course, the cinch, the saddle cinch was a cincha, and all those things that the Yavapai County cowboys just adopted all these Mexican terms.

Rounding up Wild Cattle

GAIL GARDNER SPEAKS: The cattle around Skull Valley, of course, those around in the lower valley, you could round 'em up and handle 'em in a way you'd handle cattle the right way, the ordinary way. But there were some cattle up in the head of Mule Canyon and Copper Basin that were so wild—you see, in working cattle, a cow will turn away from a mounted man. Well, those cattle up there in Copper Basin and the head of Mule Canyon got so wild they wouldn't turn away from a mounted man.

Where you have cattle that are real, real wild, and you can't round 'em up in a bunch, they won't stay in a bunch, and if you round 'em up they run right over the top of you, the only thing you can do is catch one and tie him up and lead him in. Every cowboy carried a little saw, a prunin' saw, usually a hacksaw blade in a frame, and when you caught a steer you sawed the tips of his horns off, 'bout that much, so you wouldn't hurt your horse when you went to lead him in. And you tied him up to a tree, a sapling that he could go 'round and 'round the tree. Set back, and after leaving him there all night, maybe a couple of nights, you could go lead him in. Well, there was a special way you tied 'em up. We had a little hard twist rope, you know, which was known to the trade as Plymouth Yacht line. Usually when you'd get 'em to the tree you'd just ditch 'em—throw 'em. And they'd be on the ground. You went twice around their horns and then tied a bowline knot and when you tied 'em to a tree you went around the tree and came back through that double loop, back around the tree again and back through that double loop, and then you tied a knot in the end of that rope and you tied that knot to the rope, tied it with a little twine string so the knot wouldn't come loose. When you went to lead one, you'd ride right in there—we tried to take 'em loose from the tree when we were still mounted, that was the best way. Sometimes you couldn't ride up to the tree and you'd have to get down and untie them afoot. Well that was pretty dangerous 'cause those are bronco cattle and they'd charge you at the least excuse.

Well, leadin' 'em in, there was quite an art to that. Most of the places where you could tie 'em you could ride up and untie 'em from the back of your horse. You'd take your knife and cut that string that had the knot tied down and start untying 'em, and you'd try to lead 'em with that rope that they'd been tied up with. It was about 10 feet long, and it was long enough so that you'd get a dally enough to lead 'em. Of course, sometimes you'd just have to put your lash rope around 'em to lead 'em. But that wasn't too good because the

lash rope was a slip knot and if they hung back you'd choke 'em. Well you didn't want to do that. So we usually tried to lead 'em with the rope we tied 'em up with.

When you led one, if possible you'd just ride up to the tree and untie him while you were still on your horse. Then you'd take that rope and get you a dally on it and then you'd start off, and you'd go real fast in the direction you wanted to go. Just take out there with him! Well, of course, he's comin' behind you, he couldn't do anything else—you had him tied to the saddle horn! But after you got him started then you just couldn't go slow enough. You just slow your horse down and try to lead that steer, or that cow, just as slow as they could walk. It took a lot of time, but that was the only way to get them in without hurtin' 'em, and get 'em in in good shape. Generally it'd be a mile or less.

And that was leadin' in cattle. Hard work, kinda hard on the cattle, too. And the idea was this: that this steer set back and his horns would get sore around there, well after you started him he'd soon give up pullin' against that tree and he'd stand easy. Well, when you got on your horse and went to pullin' on him why he'd come forward and that'd ease it up and that would make him lead. Well, no two of 'em ever lead alike. Some of 'em would lead best straight behind you, and some of 'em down on this side with the rope around the cantle of the saddle. Incidentally, that's why some of the old time cowboys had high cantle saddles. You're leadin' the steer and that rope from the saddle horn would get around back of the cantle, these modern flat saddles, why that rope'd cut you in two, leadin' many big wild steers.

Well, anyway, the cowboys had coined a verb in this handling of wild cattle, and the verb was "sulled." When a steer wouldn't lead he would get what you would call "sullen." So the cowboys said the steer "sulled." That meant he was sullen and wouldn't lead. And when one sulled on you why you just as well tie him up again, because if you drag him you're blowed up, you couldn't lead him a step. If you drag him a little bit why he wouldn't lead any more at all. You'd tie him up and try him another day.

If you're gatherin' steers, of course, all them'd be branded. An orejana, that was an unbranded animal. An orejana is an animal that is old enough to leave its mother but is unbranded. Well, if you caught an orejana, you took him down and branded him first thing. Got your brand on him. If he was old enough, something that was merchantable, that you wanted to sell, why then you'd tie him up. But otherwise, you'd just brand him and turn him loose and promise to see him another day when he got old enough to be marketable. There'd be [cattle in the country that got to be five years old], 'course there'd be old cows, wild old cows, but the steers, we tried to gather the steers and sell 'em.

I guess Frankie [Frank Polk] may [hold the record for bringin' in four at one time], but we had other men out there that could lead a bunch of 'em. I think Acey Bozarth was the best man I ever saw workin' cattle.

They could run like hell! But you could always let 'em straddle a rope, you know, and

throw 'em. Let 'em step over the rope and set back and you could bust one that way. Or you could, if you were handy enough to make a run you could just throw a rope over their hips and dally and go by 'em. That'd really bust one. That was the way we usually did, you know. Just, just throw the rope over their hips and go by 'em. When you throw 'em, you get off right quick and you just, you put your knee on their hips. Just pick up a hind foot and put your knee on the hip and you can hold down the wildest big steer that ever was that way. Just put your knee—he's flat on the ground — and just put a knee on his hip and get that top hind leg and just lift it up a little bit and you can hold down the biggest thing in the woods that way.

There weren't a great many of 'em. I had about five hundred head of cattle and I'd guess, I'd say that maybe sixty of 'em were wild. The rest of 'em why you could round them up and corral 'em and brand the calves and handle 'em in an orderly manner but about 50 or 60 of 'em would be up in those high brakes of Mule Canyon and Copper Basin, and also in Spruce Canyon. That's up toward Iron Springs, those high peaks up in there. And some of them get pretty wild.

In the spring you started to work after the calves had started comin' 'cause there's no use goin' out to brand if there were no calves. So you'd wait'll you had some calves and then you'd be workin' the calves in the spring. And it was in the fall that you gathered the stuff you were going to sell, if you were going to sell your steers, and we would sell all the steers we could catch. In those days yearlin's went for about thirty five dollars. Sold 'em by the head. We didn't sell by weight at all. Now they sell everything by weight. A yearlin'd go for about thirty five and a two-year-old for forty five, and a big three-year-old'd go for fifty five dollars.

[Because it was money you needed] you wanted to bring 'em in. Now sometimes there'd be an old wild cow. Well I would catch her and lead her in and put it in the home pasture and keep her in the home pasture for a month or so, 'till she got used to a man on horseback, would turn away, and you could turn her out again and then she'd never be so wild again. Yeah, we did that a lot, bring 'em in and hold 'em in the home pasture for a while and they'd get so they'd turn away from a horseman. And that way, that's the whole secret of workin' cattle is that they'll turn away from a mounted man.

Most of those wild ones were of old Mexican stock, or California stock. See, California was early settled by the Mexicans and they had Mexican cattle, and our first cattle came over from California or a lot of 'em up from Mexico. And they just had that wild streak. And boy, you had to have good fences, too!

Mostly the Herefords were pretty easy to gentle. They were that stock, you know, a beef stock, and you worked them a little bit and they'd be, they'd gentle down real nice, the Herefords would. But some of that Mexican stock, the Sonora cattle, they were, some of 'em, we had a pretty Sonora bunch for a while.

But I'll tell you another thing. They'd be some old heavy cow, a heavy headed cow, or a bull, and that's the only thing I shone at in

the cow business, was leadin' one. I never saw a son-of-a-bitch that I couldn't lead. And we'd work with these other cowboys; there'd be some old salty thing they'd tie up, "Oh, we'll leave him for Gail. Gail'l lead him in." Well, I had lots of patience. Besides that, I had a hell of a good dog. Now a dog's a good thing. I had a big old part hound, you know, and when I'd start leadin' one why he'd be way, way back behind me. I just could look back and I'd see him look around a bush. I'd always motion him to stay back. Well, that thing that I was leadin', would what they call sull, get sullen. He'd hump up and get sullen, why I'd just motion this old dog, he'd come up, he'd get to chewin' on their heels, and barkin' and pretty soon that cow'd have to go somewhere! She couldn't stay there! So she'd have to go somewhere and that'd mean I could lead her again.

And I had a dog, an Airedale that would catch a calf for me. 'Course I didn't like to do that, because he caught by the ear! And of course, that ear was — you had to ear-mark 'em to identify 'em. And I didn't like him to catch 'em by the ear. A neighbor of mine had a good cow dog that'd hold one by the nose. Well that was better because if they got scars on their nose why they could lick them and they'd get well. But the ear, they'd probably get screw bugs in the ear. We carried screw worm medicine always in our chaps pocket.

[That] old Airedale dog, I could just slap my saddle like that (slap, slap) and he'd jump up in front of me, and I'd point across the canyon somewhere, there'd be a cow and a calf over there, and I'd wait 'till I knew he saw what I was pointin' at, let him down, and he'd go over there and pretty soon he'd have that calf caught so I could get that calf and brand him without ever takin' down a rope.

[They could] see you comin'. We called that 'brush up'. They'd brush up on you. I remember a time or two—most of us cowboys got so we always carried a [spy]glass of some kind. Well that saved you all kinds of chasin' because you could see a bunch of cattle across the canyon, a big deep canyon, but if you could get that glass on 'em and holler or whistle so they'd put up their heads, why you could see what they are. If there's nothin' there you wanted, you saved your ride across that big deep canyon.

You had to have a special horse to lead one in. You wanted a horse that wouldn't kick, you know. For instance he wasn't goin' around you, you get the rope under his [the horse's] tail, why he'd kick and if that steer was right behind you if he'd kick him between the eyes, he'd kill him!

I had a horse that was awful good to lead on, you know. If the rope got under his tail why I'd just take another dally and ride out sideways and the animal'd just jerk that out from under his tail. He wouldn't kick on it. So that was something you had to know, the right kind of a horse. And also well you wanted a horse that leading it you could get him down for a slow walk. You know, one that wouldn't, wouldn't prance or anything. That would really walk slow. Because leading in those cattle, the slower you could bring 'em in, the better.

(*Wild Cattle* is continued on page 25)

1912 Trip to Oraibi by Mule and Horse

Gail Gardner speaks: Back in 1912,[1] Mr. R. E. Morrison was a prominent attorney here, and he had got a mule team from an old timer named Kim Fell who had a fine pair of mules. The wagon we had was what they called a mountain wagon. It had a top on it, a canvas top, and there were side curtains you could roll down in case it rained. We had this mule team but we had four saddle horses along. Mr. Morrison's son rode a saddle horse, and I rode my horse, and Chester Crawford was along and he rode a horse. The girls would take turns riding the extra horse, and they would ride in the wagon the rest of the time.

We left Prescott fairly early and our first day was the longest trip of all, about 42 miles from Prescott to Camp Verde.

[The fifth] night we got into Oraibi. At Oraibi, Mr. Morrison had rented an Indian house. They had gone back to their original homes in the village and rented this house to us. It was a nice house, just one of the Agency houses. It was just immaculate! Those women had sure kept it up nice. We stayed in that all during the Snake Dance.

I had a little black mare that was very gentle and I kept her in Oraibi and the only trouble was horse feed for that mare. Hay was three dollars and a half a bale, and rolled barley was five dollars for a seventy pound sack. So it was a little expensive to keep a horse there. But the rest of our stock were out in this pasture that was just fenced five miles on one side, five miles on the front, and five miles on the other, and kingdom come on the other side. No fence at all!

There was no water in [the pasture] except the well. My job was to go over there every day and haul up water for our livestock. There was lots of other [Indian] stock in there. My job was to see that our horses and mules got water and keep some of that Indian stock away while I was watering my stock.

I remember going over to water the stock one morning. These Hopi Indians have always been great runners and this Indian was a-trottin' along ahead of me goin' to his field and I was a-horseback. I just did well to keep him in sight. He was sure makin' time! Those Hopis were pretty much trained runners. They'd run out to cultivate their field and then run back at night. It'd be maybe four miles or five miles.

We saw one Snake Dance at Oraibi and then we went over to Hotevilla and saw a Flute Dance, where the Indian goes down in the spring, under water, and then comes back up with these emblems of water. He'd go out of sight and then come out, hold his breath and then come up with a jug of water. They'd take the jug to their field. That was sacred water and helped the fields grow better.

There's three mesas there: there's Oraibi Mesa, and Middle Mesa, and there's three villages there, Mishongnovi, Shipaulovi, and Shungopovi. And then there's the Walpi Mesa which is at the other end of the Hopi

[1] In other interviews, Gail establishes the year as 1914 or '15, after he had returned from college at Dartmouth.

Reservation. Walpi is a high mesa and there was a little town at the foot of that mesa that they called Polacca. We went to all three mesas and saw a Snake Dance at Oraibi and a Snake Dance at Hotevilla and this Flute Dance, I guess that was at Shungopovi.

Now, Walpi, that's the smallest. They just have a very little dance plaza. I never enjoyed those dances that I saw at Walpi much. The plaza's too small. But that middle mesa, at Sichemovi, Shipaulovi, and Shungopovi there's larger plazas. Oraibi's a real good sized dance plaza. But Walpi's a little bit of a dance plaza and the dancers at Walpi appeared to be crowded. But at the other mesas they weren't at all.

I remember them getting ready for that Flute Dance. They dressed the women, the squaws, right out there while you were watching them. They had a bunch of broom-weed tied together and the men would brush the girls' hair with the stems of that.

The Snake Dance lasted just about as long as one of our [Smoki] dances. There were two Kivas. You'd hear the Antelopes in one Kiva and the Snakes in another Kiva; they'd be chanting in there. Then they'd come out when it was time for the Snake Dance. They had the tromp boards; Sipapau they called the tromp board. Our dance is very much like it. In fact it's patterned after it, just practically the same thing. I think there would be about twelve or fourteen [dancers]. Of course, always there were the gatherers, just the way we have the gatherers.

We would see 'em bitten by rattlesnakes. [We] would see one bitten on the hand, well he'd just lick it and just go on and dance. Didn't seem to bother 'em any. One man was struck in the face but he just wiped off his face and went on dancin'. It's never known, whether they draw the fangs out of those rattlesnakes or not. Of course, any snake — you know our bull snakes have teeth. And in our dances sometimes a bull snake will bite you and draw blood.

When we were camping at Oraibi, I'd just unsaddle my horse and my saddle and spurs and bridle and everything, and the Hopis might come along, and they'd pick up your stuff and look at it, but you never had to bother about the Hopis stealin' something. But what the Navajos had been doing, somebody'd camp and they'd get in and run off their livestock and then come around and tell them their livestock had strayed and "for $25 we'll get your horses and mules back for you!" Well, so when we camped in the Navajo country at Tall Cheko or Little Burro Springs, why I just took my bed out and rolled it down right where our horses were staked.

I've been up there several times [since]. Our Hopi girl that lived with us made the benches for us right at the end of the Antelope Line! "This is for MY people!" she said. Everybody at Hotevilla knew that Louise had lived with us, and we thought a lot of Louise, and we really got the red carpet treatment. That was nice! Everybody'd smile at us, you know, they knew who we were. I didn't feel like an outsider. They just looked like they were so glad to see us that we'd come up to see the Snake Dance.

His Daughter Remembers Gail Gardner

By Cynthia Gardner

Gail and Delia Gardner were hospitable people and the best of all possible parents. Fortunately for me, their teenage daughter, they genuinely liked kids and were willing to let us push back the furniture, roll up the rugs, and dance on the hardwood floors in the living room. The rules for parties were simple:

1.) Clean up the kitchen.
2.) Roll the rugs back down.
3.) Lock the front door.
4.) Turn out all the lights.

Usually, the boys would all troop upstairs to talk hunting and fishing with my father or to seek advice from my sympathetic mother. Not until just before time to go home would the dancing begin.

Four generations of Gardners and Steigers have lived in this Prescott home.

One particular night I remember vividly. I was dancing in the dark front hall with the boy I liked best at the time, on the verge of a kiss, when suddenly the light went on. There was my father, at the foot of the stairs, in his bathrobe, his voice booming: "What's going on down here?"

Before I could die on the spot or gather my wits, my father had herded us all into the kitchen. "It's not just the noise", he said, as he opened the cupboard door. "It's the vibrations." The bottle he took out of the cupboard was empty. Why he looked in the flour bin, I will never know, but he did, and sure enough, there was another empty bottle, which he held up for our inspection.

I had never seen my father in a bathrobe before and I never saw him in a bathrobe again, but there was no doubt that he meant business. What he said to his teenage audience was short and stern:

"You have not only abused my hospitality, you have also made me liable for contributing to the delinquency of minors. I could go to jail for this. Now go home. This party is over." And so it was. Without further ado, my father went back upstairs, leaving his teenage guests with the shaming truth of his words.

Fortunately, none of the kids had a driver's license and no one was hurt, but the damage was done. To make matters worse, the next day my father discovered that two more bottles were missing from the case of imported sherry he kept with his fishing gear just inside the basement door.

The best of all possible parents believed me when told that I honestly didn't know about the drinking in the kitchen, and I wasn't scolded for 'dancing in the dark,' (which was my first thought when I saw my father at the foot of the stairs). My mother and father didn't rub things in with long lectures and my

friends were still my friends, but I seriously doubted if I would ever be allowed to have another party.

A few weeks later, when I asked I was truly surprised to hear: "Yes, just remember the rules. Clean up the kitchen. Roll the rugs back down. Lock the front door. Turn out all the lights."

I could hardly believe my good fortune and neither could my friends, so we were on our best behavior, but during the course of the evening, one of the boys opened the cupboard door in the kitchen.

Inside, where the sherry used to be kept, there was a sign. Written on a piece of cardboard were the following words:

"IF YOU LITTLE BASTARDS
THINK THERE'S ANY MORE,
THERE AIN'T ANY.
FROM NOW ON."

And there wasn't. There were lots more parties and as far as I know, no more teenage abuses of the Gardner hospitality. In the years that followed, many of those boys, who were now men, would come to visit my father. While the talk was mostly about hunting and fishing, there was always a chuckle when someone reminded my father of that sign in his kitchen cupboard.

WILD CATTLE

(Continued from page 21

One thing we should mention about working cattle, and very important it is, that is the earmarks. A brand on a cow determines the ownership. If my brand is on that cow, why it's my cow. But there's [also] an earmark.

There are various kinds of earmarks. We'll mention just a few: there's a split, a crop and split, underbit, overbit, crop, swallow-fork; all these various earmarks. And there's dozens—hundreds of combinations: one in the right ear, one in the left ear. Well the purpose of the earmark is this: When you're riding on the range and you see a bunch of cattle far away, you can put your glass on 'em and whistle and they'll put their ears up. You can't see at a glance what the brand on those cattle is but you can see the earmarks right away. And working cattle in a herd, why you can't turn every cow around to see what iron is on the hip or the ribs, but you can always see the earmarks. So working on cattle, cutting them out, separating them, you go by the earmarks entirely.

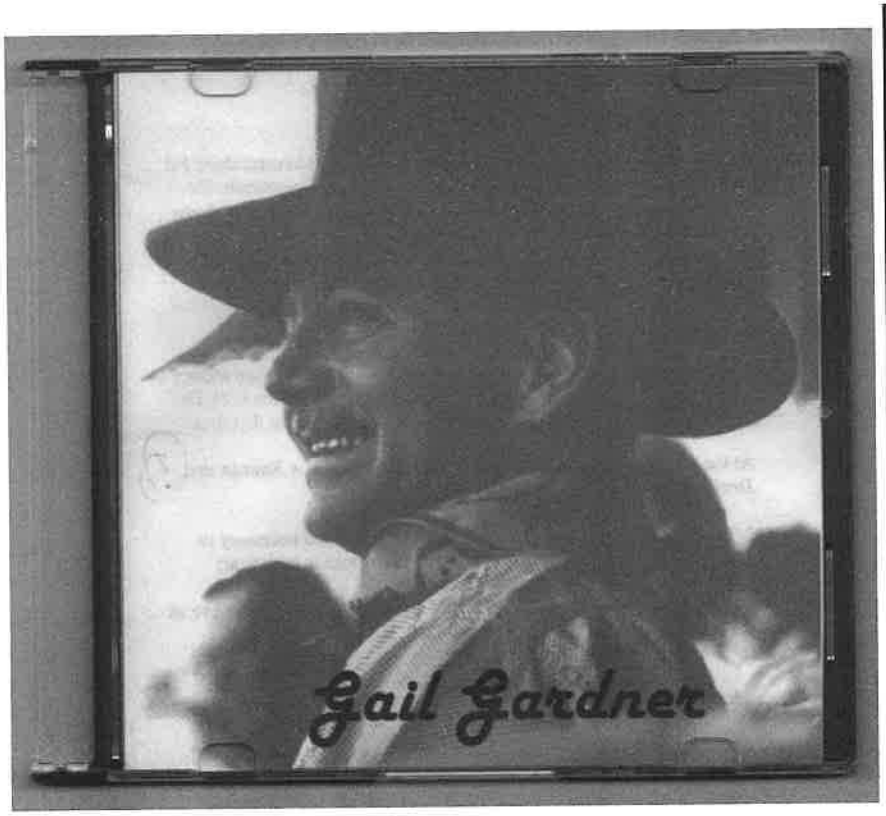
A Very Personal Earmark

Speaking of earmarks, a local surgeon tells a story about removing some skin cancers from Gail's face and noticing that an old injury had left a prominent split on one ear. Since Gail was still sedated the doctor went ahead and repaired the ear. He was not prepared for the result when Gail awoke.

When he visited the recovering Gardner, the young doctor found Gail in a real state of anger with some unkind words aimed at him. Gail was shouting, "Some son-of-a-bitch ruined my swallerfork." Grandson Gail Steiger remembers that, "When we went to the VA days later to bring Papa home he was still mad about losing his swallow-fork."

Almost all of this issue of the Territorial Times was produced from seventeen audio recordings of Gail Gardner spanning a period of nearly 30 years from the early '60s to the late '80s. Since Gail is even more fun to listen to than to read, we have put together a CD of three actual original, uncut recordings. Except for the "Temperance lecture, these recordings do not duplicate the written material in this issue.

- The first cut is a talk Gail gave to the Westerners in 1968 about prohibition. At the end of this talk, Gail sings "The Moonshine Steer", a poem and song he wrote about rounding up wild cattle and one particularly recalcitrant steer.
- The second selection is the famous Temperance Lecture that Gail gave to the Smoki dancers before each performance of the Snake Dance to ensure order.
- And finally, Gail's Tribute to Barry Goldwater, given at a gathering of the Smoki in 1964.



From "Prohibition"

"Now in the early days in the bars in Prescott they didn't have any barstools. You could sit down at a card table if you were playin' a little poker and they'd bring you a drink there, but you did your drinking standing up. And if you couldn't, you fell down..."

From the "Temperance Lecture"

"All right, to have the courage to handle these ferocious big bull snakes, many of these early soldiers thought they needed a little Dutch Courage. The late Sam Ensminger, before the Snake Dance, would set at each man's station a little four-ounce bottle of moonshine. This was in the prohibition days. That moonshine was about a hundred and twenty proof; it tasted like the bottom of a birdcage..."

To order this CD, please enclose a check for $12, postpaid anywhere in the U.S. to

Westerners International, Prescott Corral
P.O. Box 11086,
Prescott, Arizona 86304-1086

You may also purchase the CD from Sharlot Hall Museum, The Smoki Museum, or the Worm Bookstore.

If you would like a transcript of the Prohibition Lecture, please visit the Sharlot Hall website at www.sharlothall.org/archives

ABOUT US

The award-winning Prescott Corral was founded in 1962 as an affiliate of Westerners International, an organization dedicated to the preservation of the real history of the American West. The Prescott Corral's most recent honor went to corral member Dr. Joe Briggs who won third place in the Phillip A. Danielson competition for best presentation by any Westerner member in 2009.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Dick Bowerman moved from Mesa to Skull Valley following a 20-year teaching career and began researching local history topics to develop presentations to give to groups interested in western American history. His article in this issue was developed from his award winning presentation about Gail Gardner. Dick is a past president of the Skull Valley Historical Society

Artist **Bruce D. Fee** is officially a Westerner International "Living Legend" for his many contributions to preserving local history. Among his many contributions to the Prescott community are his long service with the Smoki People (a past Smoki Chief) and the Prescott Westerners (a past Corral Sheriff). He has long been one of the most popular local speakers about our historical heritage and in 2004 he won first place in the prestigious annual Phillip A. Danielson competition for best presentation by any Westerner member in that year.

Russ Sherwin is the most recent addition to the *Territorial Times* Editorial Board and has already made essential contributions as is evident in this edition. He and his wife Donna moved to Prescott in 2008 after seven years cruising their boat on the west coast from Mexico to Alaska. Russ is active in transcribing Oral History interviews for the Sharlot Hall Museum, the *Territorial Times* and the Wyoming State Archives in Cheyenne.

ABOUT THE BACK COVER

By Bruce Fee

The idea for a Smoki statue came from George Phippen and me. We planned to do a "heroic" size presentation and put it in the Memorial Park where the "Settlers" statue is now, but George died and the project went with him.

Later I felt that the idea needed to be revived, so I asked Pat Haptonstall if he would be interested. He said he would, and the decision was made to have Barry Goldwater and Gail Gardner as the dancers. Pat researched the details for the piece and came up with a perfect bronze miniature. Sam Steiger got the Republican Committee to buy the first piece for Barry, and Gail got number two.

As time went on we sold quite a number of the miniatures with the idea of eventually doing the heroic size that George and I envisioned. The idea has been on hold for many years, but I still hope that someday it will come to pass.

Smoki Snake Dancers in a Bronze Miniature by Pat Haptonstall